

May 2016

Could **YOU** be a volunteer in Stuart House

(or do you know anybody who could?)

We have something of a crisis at the moment, with some of our long-term volunteers needing to move on. This means that, in the short term, a few continuing volunteers (including House Administrator Sioux – would you believe that actually she's employed for only 20 hours a week!) are contributing yet more time.

Just a few hours would help so much

In the café – a particular need (especially, but not only, Tuesdays), as this is where most of the income desperately needed for the House to survive comes from

Covering Reception

Serving in the Shop

Stewarding Exhibitions

Gardening

A huge **THANK YOU** to all those past, present and, we hope, future volunteers.



The first meeting of the committee of trustees (plus Sioux), under new chairman Bob Hollingdale, although 3 members had to send apologies this time.
n.b. Sioux is away 12th - back 23rd May



Work on the windows is nearing completion

SUE'S NEWS of the Committee Meeting of 20th April

This month's Trustees' meeting was the first meeting under the Chair of Bob Hollingdale. Much of the meeting concentrated on procedural matters and the way future meetings will be conducted.

Bob's first task was to identify the roles of the various Trustees. Whilst the meeting went a long way to establish responsibilities, the list could not be finalized as three trustees were unable to attend. It is hoped that at the next meeting the list will be completed and can then be provided to the members in the May newsletter. The advantage will then be that if anyone has a specific issue to raise which falls within the responsibility of one particular trustee, the matter can be raised with that trustee who, in turn, will liaise with Sioux. As hitherto, Sioux, as House Manager, remains primarily responsible for the day to day activities of the House.

For the first time our meeting was held in the King's Room. For myself I was not aware, until last Tuesday, of the merits of that room for meetings - people do say, that I am not 'visually aware'!

As a 'responsible dog owner' (of many dogs I am told!) Bob wants to make sure that visitors are aware of the fact that well-behaved dogs on leads are welcome in the garden. Appropriate signage to that effect may well be in situ by the time the newsletter goes to press, and no doubt some members will have noted the dog bowl in the porch. Many other organisations/businesses provide similar refreshment facilities for our canine friends.

Again the need for more volunteers cannot be stressed enough: if you are able to volunteer in any capacity please notify Sioux.

Tony presented his report and concluded by saying that although he lives in hope for a break-even year at worst, he remains nervous about our ability to make some of the forecast figures. The café, however, continues to thrive. The need for more exhibitions and fund-raising is under consideration. I do hope we can make Tony happy by the end of this year!

Sue Glencross, Hon. Sec.

Some recent comments in our Visitors' Book – always good for getting a new perspective on a place that we may take for granted (ed.)

A hidden gem. Such a lovely place.

Most interesting. And we just stumbled upon this place

MAGIC!

Could spend all day here. Thanks

Inspiring. Well done.

Very interesting, informative, and lovely retreat in the garden.

Beautiful food, friendly staff, peaceful surroundings

The annual Bo Foaks Memorial Walk took place on Saturday morning, April 9th. Iain Rowe led, assisted by Brian Oldham from Liskeard Walkers are Welcome with additional input from Tony Wood. The weather was extraordinary – sleet, a hail-storm, cold, and wonderful sunshine. The combination of donations and the profits from the bread, soup and cake lunch afterwards meant that over £100 was



raised for the House. As always, it is fascinating to explore, with experts, parts of Liskeard that we can believe we know so well. Thinking about the previous layout of



streets, the gardens of the big houses, the miners' 'courts' with their overflowing drains, the industrial areas, the places where people stood to hear John Wesley, the A38 coming through central Liskeard until 1973 and so much more all help to give us a greater appreciation of our lovely town and its past inhabitants. (ed)

'What's it Worth' Antiques Event on Wednesday 20th April

The few who came to the evening to test or expand their knowledge of antiques had a really interesting time in the hands of Paul Clark of Clark's Auction Rooms, Liskeard's very successful new business. The evening was organised around ten sample antiques and those attending were asked to assess what each might fetch at auction. From a humble ARP Warden's bell to a very pretty Victorian brooch and an extremely rare set of 18th century Arithmetic Playing Cards, the guesses were as wide as the range of articles. Paul's explanations of each item were made even more interesting by his explanation of the issues involved in selling them. There were stories of treasures found under piles of rubbish and of fraudsters' efforts to cheat sellers and auctioneers. Those attending and participating were very appreciative of Paul's presentation and were left, as was he, wondering what each item will actually fetch when sold at his subsequent auction.

Perhaps it was just a bad evening to choose as we only made £35 for the Trust and I, having organised the event, was left apologising to Paul for the low turn-out. However Paul said he had enjoyed it and those attending all said how very much they had learnt and they expressed their appreciation warmly.

Tony Wood

Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer

Last month's puzzle: *who's been eating the flowers?* has been solved. Was it early-waking slugs and snails, or non-hibernating caterpillars? No – it was sparrows! Recently, whilst sitting quietly in the garden with a cup of coffee, I saw two appear and, bold as brass, start pecking away at the primroses in the tubs next to the mirror, occasionally looking in to admire themselves. A websearch revealed that it is not uncommon for birds to eat flowers in early Spring, sparrows and greenfinches in particular being partial to the yellow buds of crocuses and primroses, moving on to other colours when they've devoured the first course. Why do they do this? Petals may be a tasty treat after a long winter, or the birds benefit from nutrients in them; or (my favourite!) they just want to pretty-up their nests ready for the breeding season.



In the sunshine the other day, there was quite a large animated gathering of sparrows chirping volubly as they zipped around at the top of the old apple tree. From time to time they would dart across the garden and disappear under the Stuart House eaves, so it seems they are indeed sorting out their nests already. Apparently a breeding pair can raise up to four sets of offspring in a season, which is to be welcomed as sparrows

are very amusing little birds, and are said to be in decline nationally.

I also discovered why many of the foxgloves had disappeared: molluscs. I thought these plants were slug and snail proof, but no, the shiny trails that bedecked shredded leaves pointed clearly to the culprits. Foxgloves are poisonous as they contain digitalis which usually causes a massive heart attack, though sometimes severe vomiting expels the cardiac poisons before they can do serious harm. So I went to find out whether snails have hearts – yes, they do. I wonder what effect digitalis has on them, then?



Now that Spring has properly arrived, an eruption of colour has returned to the garden (sparrow nibbling is no longer noticeable). Narcissi, tulips, forget-me-nots and bluebells are all widely in bloom, overseen by the majestic magnolia from which the light-pink petals gently flutter down like giant pieces of confetti. However, a query has been received from a member of the public - why are there Spanish bluebells in the jewel beds? Well, this is because the garden has developed over the years often using plants contributed by well-meaning members of the public, and no doubt packets marked "bluebells" have been donated. Such bulbs are always the foreign sort where the flower stalks have an upright boldness rather than the demure stance of the

British type. They can, however, be relied on to be totally dependable, although they must be carefully watched as they will try to spread far and wide by multiplying their bulbs and freely scattering their very fertile seed.

It seems to me that if one were to leave the garden to its own devices for a number of years and then return, the brute sorts would well and truly have taken over: the Bluebells, Schizostylis ("Kafir") lilies, hardy Geranium, Crocosmia, and of course Alkanet, with maybe some Japanese Anemones, all slugging it out, with Bramble and Buddleia pitching in for good measure! However, for now, there is no such nightmare. The Kerria bushes have produced their delicate fluffy yellow blooms again, many perennials including aquilegia and achillea are reappearing, the Canterbury bells are starting to shoot up, and the Japanese primulae I feared had also vanished are showing through. Peace, order, and certainty currently prevail!

Malcolm Mort

STARTS THEATRE s u u t t t a

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Can love last forever, or just 'til the end of the show?
"Daisy and Johnny" deals with theme of falling in love. It looks at the myths and realities in a sometimes light-hearted manner, at others, a brutally realistic way.
This show is in Starts Studio.

Daisy and Johnny
A Musical Theatre production
by Starts Theatre

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"A wild dedication of yourselves... To undiscovered waters, undreamed shores."
The Actor's Wheel return with a re-telling of Shakespeare's most enigmatic work of love, jealousy and redemption.

THE WINTER'S TALE
A Musical Theatre production
by Starts Theatre

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See website for full details of performers.
This, the fifth year's festival will feature the usual eclectic mix of readings, workshops, visual art, walks and music.
Advance tickets for this year will be available via Hall for Cornwall Box Office.
www.hallforcornwall.co.uk
All BMPF events are in Starts Studio.

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Here's a great chance to see local youngsters present this exuberant musical based on Hans Christian Andersen's beloved story, 'The Ugly Duckling'.

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A Musical Theatre production
by Starts Theatre

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South East Cornwall Museums Forum
Further information available from Chairman L.Asprey 01752 847800

Grand Family History Discovery Day

DISCOVER YOUR ANCESTORS
DISCOVER YOUR HERITAGE AND YOUR ROOTS

Liskeard Public Hall, West Street, Liskeard

Saturday 21st May 2016 10.00am -3.00pm

Information & displays by

Plymouth & West Devon Record Office.	Torpoint Archives
Cornwall Family History Society	Elliotts Shop (TPS)
Cornwall On Line Parish Clerks	Liskeard Museum
Devon Family History Society	Stuart House
Kresen Kernow	Looe Museum
Liskeard Old Cornwall Society	Launceston Museum
St Neot Community Archive	Callington Museum
Polperro Family History Group	Bodmin Museum
Cornwall Regimental Museum	Lostwithiel Museum
Saltash Heritage Museum & Local History Centre	Fowey Museum

There will be lots of online assistance and advice
So take advantage of this free service

Refreshments available

FREE Entry

↑ Stuart House is a SECMF member, and has a stall at the Family History Day.

Thanks, from Sioux - and us all - to two long-serving cafe volunteers

Denise Larner and Margaret Hawken have been the driving force of Tuesday cover in the cafe for three years now. We have seen the cafe go from strength to strength over this time, and we are so very grateful for all their hard work. However, things move on, and with so many other calls on their time they are having to step back from this role. The Trust is hugely thankful to them and wish them well in their coming endeavours.

We are not losing Margaret totally as she has, along with ex-chairman Bruce, very kindly volunteered to cover the Saturday morning café once a month.

(Some of) Valley Voices in concert on Sunday 17th April



Angela Wunnam (our Sunday concert series organiser) was away for this concert. I have deputised for her in the past, but on this occasion was actually a member of the choir. The photo indicates the split role - and also my temporary failure to master the camera's timer-delay switch!

As the full Valley Voices choir can no longer fit into the Stuart House Gallery (neither physically nor in terms of sound volume), just seven of the more local members sang. The whole choir had performed some of the pieces in Fowey for RNLI the evening before, but the different balance needed for Stuart House was a lovely challenge, and it certainly suited the madrigals we sang. We enjoyed the concert tremendously. The audience said that they did too – and they looked a trustworthy lot!

Some of our material was quite intense and very moving to sing, such as John IV of Portugal's 'Crux Fidelis' and several of the folk songs. Other pieces were wonderfully cheerful, including 'I Do Like to be beside the Seaside' and the all-female voice arrangement of 'Soldier Soldier' - in theory, a sad (if foolish) story but which made everyone laugh. The choir would like to thank our singer-conductor Liz Saudek (on the right), and she thanks us. The concert ended with audience participation in the Tallis Canon and it was wonderful to be part of a whole room singing that glorious music.

Rachel Bennett

**Sunday 22nd May 7pm
Liskeard Public Hall**

A Festival of Music part of the Bo Foaks Legacy

A concert organised by Stuart House, showcasing the musical talents of young people in the area, including pupils from some of our local schools.

Tickets £4 adult, £2 children, £10 family (2 adults, 2 children), available from Stuart House or at the door.

Our next
Sunday Afternoon Concert is
June 26th at 2.30 pm.
Ross Morris
classical guitarist



Bo Foaks, folk musician, loved Bodmin Moor and the local history heritage and was a great supporter of Stuart House. He wanted to encourage the musical hopes of young people. Tony Piper's photograph is on the infamous 2009 Stuart House Walk on Craddock Moor, just before the fog and rain.

ART EXHIBITION May 31st to June 5th Charles Summers and Peter Thwaites

This promises to be a wonderful exhibition which we are proud to have in the Stuart House Gallery.



Charles Summers FRSA is a local artist who spent his childhood in the West Indies and South America and has since travelled widely. He has exhibited and sold works in many places including London galleries. As a freeman of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers, he has had work commissioned for the Queen and the Duchess of Cornwall. We remember the varied and exciting images, in paint and collage, from his exhibition at Stuart House last October.

Peter Thwaites is a self-taught artist now resident locally working mainly in water-colour but also using acrylics, and considering using oils too. He has exhibited with the Royal Watercolour Society at the Bankside Gallery in London. His subjects cover natural history, landscapes and seascapes, and he was commissioned by the British Mycological Society to illustrate a 'Pocket Guide to Fungi', with more work on fungi since.



TEXTILE EVENTS IN MAY



**SEWING
BEE EVENT**

STUART HOUSE
LISKEARD 23RD-30TH MAY

FABRICS-TRIMMINGS-THREADS
SEWED CRAFTS-BUTTONS
SEWING KITS-AND LOTS MORE.
ALL AT BARGAIN PRICES.

PROCEEDS TO STUART HOUSE
CHARITABLE TRUST.
FREE ENTRY TO HOUSE AND
GARDEN. CAFÉ AVAILABLE.

CLASSES IN SEWING TECHNIQUES, BAGS,
LAVENDER LADIES, AND OTHERS
THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.
RING 01579 347347 FOR DETAILS.

↑ A whole week of 'in House' sewing events!
23rd to 28th May.
Donations of materials in advance are welcomed

YARN BOMBING WORKSHOP

Saturday 21st May
10am – 12.30pm
Free

Are you interested in ... Making something different with yarn? Helping to liven up Liskeard with wool for the 3 Bags Full wool festival this autumn? Helping refugees?

The workshop will have patterns, advice, ideas and material – bring your hands, ideas and maybe materials too. We plan for lots of woolly creations at the festival, and for squares for blankets in traditional gansey stitches.

For more information, email 3bagsfull.liskeard@gmail.com

HERITAGE IN JUNE

Stuart House
Arts & Heritage Centre

**ARCHIVES
Exhibition**

“CONNECTIONS”

13 – 18 June 2016
Weekdays: 9.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.
Saturday : 9.30 a.m. - Noon

Plus

TALKS (same subject) by Eileen Crouch

Monday, 13 June at 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 15 June at 2.30 p.m.

Tickets £4 – in advance or on the door
Proceeds to Stuart House Trust
Reg Charity 294384

Stuart House, Barras Street, Liskeard PL14 6AB
T: 01579 347347 E: info@stuarthouse.org

↑ In June, Eileen Crouch will mount an exhibition and give talks on Stuart House's **Connections** – with royalty, St Paul's, mining, West Sussex and more.....

Diary of Events

May 2016



Monday 2nd	Bank Holiday – the House is shut
Tuesday 3rd and Tuesday 17 th	Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 – 4 pm.
Every Thursday	Knit 'n' Knatter meet from 10.30 am. to 1.30 pm. All welcome
Monday 9th	Liskeard Poetry Group 4-6 pm.
Thursday 19th	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnes, Hampton & Littlewood. 10 am. to 12 noon
Saturday 21st	'Yarn Bombing' workshop 10am – 12.30 pm. (see p.7)
Saturday 21st	Grand Family History Day in the Public Hall – Stuart House is participating (see p.5)
Sunday 22nd	A Festival of Music : the Bo Foaks Memorial Youth Concert, 7pm. Public Hall (see p.6)
Monday 23 rd – Saturday 28th	Sewing Bee: a week of sewing events (see p.7)
Monday 30th	Bank Holiday – the House is shut
Tuesday 31 st to June 5th	Art Exhibition – Charles Summers FRSA and Peter Thwaites (see p.7)
Coming in June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Summers & Peter Thwaites Art Exhibition continues • 'Connections' exhibition and talks (see p.7) • Rose Gibbon Art exhibition and Studio Clearance sale • Ross Morris guitar recital • Grand Craft Exhibition organized by Victor and Nancy

The House, Garden, Old Kitchen Café and Computer Research Suite are open 9.30 am – 3.30 pm each weekday and until 12.30 pm (Café 12 noon) on Saturdays. The House is open at these times for all events unless stated otherwise. The Office is open every weekday until at least 2 pm.

Articles, information, notices and photographs for the Stuart House Newsletter to the editor, please (who must reserve the right to edit as necessary), before 25th of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter. Leave with Sioux in the Office or email to rachelpbennett59@gmail.com